

- *Have you ever been thirsty... I mean really, really thirsty.. parched. How about thirsty to point of death... Some people have.*
- *...Have you been thirsty in your SOUL. Parched.... For joy. Peace. For hope, maybe for love. Thirsty to the point where you could describe... mortal agony.*
- *If you HAVE been there, ever felt like you had to pretend that you weren't? Weren't thirsty? Where?*
  - o *Around those you love? Peer groups? Everyone?*
  - o *Honest, Possible answer is IN CHURCH. With God?*
- *IF YES, two big thoughts to consider today*
  - o *FIRST- God/scripture never asks us to pretend*
    - *In fact, if we go way back into the incredible gift that is the Psalms, Honesty of our brokenness isn't offensive to God, it is worship*
  - o *SECOND- GOD invites us, beckons us, to come to him- honestly- In the midst of struggle- not just to ask him to do things ABOUT our struggle- but to know HIM, know his presence, where we are right now.*
- *TODAY, AND next Sunday, we are taking a two week break from Acts. This Sunday I am out of town, and next Sunday we will have a special communion message at both of our services- and for you if you join us online.*
- *This Sunday my friend and mentor Dr. Randy Simmonds will be speaking at Beaver Creek and Edwards, and you can join him at 11:00 on Sunday through our Facebook page- link on site.*
- *SO, in my absence, I thought I would share with you this message, one I gave several years ago in a series based in the Psalms. I had a lot of feedback on last weeks message- clear that many people are really struggling with a LOT now... and the honesty and hope of this Psalm just may be something you need to hear. Not from me, but from God.*
- *Psalms! One reason the Psalms connect with us so intimately is because IN THEM, we see very REAL PEOPLE, pouring their hearts out to God in the full range of human emotion... including the themes of lament, worship, and thanksgiving.*
- *The theme of LAMENT is found throughout the Psalms. What's so striking is that these complaints against God- the cries of brutal honesty about the hardship of life- for the ancient Hebrews, and Jewish people to this day, these are poems of worship!*
- *We can relate to these psalms of lament, because even as believers, there are times when we find ourselves feeling that God is far away.*
  - o *God is silent*
  - o *Traumatic circumstances, prolonged hurt*
  - o *Guilt, shame, fatigue, hopelessness*
  - o *Bottom line... spiritual depression*
  - o *WE CRY OUT... GOD! JESUS... where are you? How do I escape from this place...*
- *This is the heart cry that we see in many of the psalms, and one of the most poignant is 42. Psalm 42 and 43 together form one larger poem, but focus on 42 now.*
- † *Psalm 42 begins: For the director of music. A maskil of the Sons of Korah.*
- *Tradition holds that Psalm 42 was written by, or expressing the experience of, King David.*
- *Intended for musical worship...*

- **Maskil- teaching, impart wisdom**
- **Son's of Korah- essentially, the chapel band- family in Levite tribe assigned to write, arrange, and possibly perform music in temple worship.**
- **SCENE: David in mountains of northern Israel, far from safety of Jerusalem, far from the temple. Not told specific occasion, but under great stress...**

<sup>1</sup> As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God.

<sup>2</sup> My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?

<sup>3</sup> My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, "Where is your God?"

<sup>4</sup> These things I remember as I pour out my soul: **(soul like water, no firmness)**

how I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng.

- **What do we see here?**
  - **Pants... intense desire for water... place in his life where intense desire for God, to know his presence... desire born out of difficulty**
  - **Thirst... where can I go to find him? God, where are you!**
  - **So despondent, people mock... where is he?**
  - **V4- Didn't use to be like this! He remembers being in Jerusalem, temple, presence of God, protected by God, surrounded by joy, worship in temple... but now, he is separate, alone...**
- **This leads into refrain, repeated 3 times (with 43)**

<sup>5</sup> Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?

Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

- **What is David doing here? He's reflecting on himself, asking himself why he is downcast**
- **Downcast/disturbed... bent over, under weight of sorrow, anxious**
- **But in this place of sorrow, there is image of David realizing- coming to his senses just a little- that his sorrow and downcast spirit isn't right. Just maybe he's caught up in it too much, realizing that he's being a bit self-obsessed about his situation... THE SITUATION IS REAL, but he's realizing that there is HOPE, that he needs to lift his head! WHAT IS THAT HOPE?**

**Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him,  
my Savior and my God.**

- **He's challenging himself here to MAKE A CHOICE. I'm HERE- sorrow, and yet Lord, I will choose to look to you...**
- **He continues in this thought...**

<sup>6</sup> My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you

from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar.

- **Hermon Mountains are headwaters of Jordan river- Mizar is peak... this is where he is, but not where he wants to be. LORD, I am downcast!... but I am trying to remember you, even in this distant place.**
- **Then David completely bares his soul...**

<sup>7</sup> Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me.

- **He is overcome with his grief**
- **Deep to Deep... image of water crashing in, as soon as one wave subsides, another comes,**

- **CONTRAST with dry, parched, panting**
- **Really, he is crying out... IM DROWNING, can't escape**
- **AND YET...**

<sup>8</sup> By day the LORD directs his love, (**commands.. love/mercy**)  
at night his song is with me— a prayer to the God of my life.

- **Here, even it midst of drowning, he is looking forward with hope to a better time. “There will be a day when the Lord brings me his love and mercy”**
- **“At Night”... two interpretations- ‘Night’ as hardship, calamity... ‘even then you will be with me’, OR, some see a time of rest, peace, lullaby, that as the day comes, so will be nights of peace**
- **EITHER WAY, HE IS NOT LOSING HOPE.**
- **“MY PRAYER, MY HEART CRY, is to the GOD WHO GIVES ME LIFE!”**
- **And now, right back into the water...**

<sup>9</sup> I say to God my Rock, -- “Why have you forgotten me?”

- **Do you see the contrast, the tension of emotion? GOD, you are my ROCK. MY LIFE... where are you!!**
- **He is NOT forsaking God, but in deep honesty, wondering if God has forsaken him. Been there?**
- **Does this sound familiar? Jesus... My god...**

Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?”

<sup>10</sup> My bones suffer mortal agony -- as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, -- “Where is your God?”

- **He is crying out “God where are you!?”... Then, his foes ask the same thing- “Where is your God?!”**
- **It is the question of his foes that cause him to one again question the depth of his sorrow...**
- <sup>11</sup> Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?
- **SELF, wake up! Lift my eyes! Psalm 121... “I lift my eyes to the mountains (heaven) my help comes from the lord”**
- **And he make the choice... STILL IN THE WATER, STILL IN HIS SITUATION, he makes the choice...**

Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

### **HOW SPEAK TO US? THREE THOUGHTS**

- **1. In the midst of great struggle, lift your heart to God. When things are hard, It is our human nature to look down, to get caught in the trap of self pity and worst case scenarios. David's testimony calls us to stop just looking at ourselves and start looking at God- who He is, what is TRUE because of who He is! Choice of faith, change of focus**

Hebrews 12:2-3 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

- **2. Likewise, when we are downcast, our temptation is to look at the past. What if. If only. Mistakes I've made. My failures. Injustices. WE DO NEED TO LEARN, but as people of faith in the GOODNESS OF GOD... as followers of Christ, we are called to LIVE IN THE NOW, with our hope vested in the FUTURE.**

Philippians 3:12-14 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet

to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

– **3. Last, when, like David, we find ourselves downcast and disturbed... by God's grace, may we take hold of the incredible gift that David did not have... the Joy, Peace, Hope that is ours in Jesus Christ. THIS IS A CHOICE OF FAITH... to choose to set our minds on that which is good- that which is true- in Christ.**

*Philippians 4:4-8 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*<sup>8</sup> Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. GOD OF PEACE WILL BE WITH YOU.*

– **David was thirsty, learning to trust God to give him life.**

– **NOW, IN CHRIST, our thirst HAS BEEN QUENCHED. When we find ourselves in Psalm 42, WE KNOW THAT OUR HOPE IS IN CHRIST, AND WHAT HE HAS ALREADY DONE. Our HOPE IS HIM.**

#### **John 4:13-14**

<sup>13</sup> Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

#### **John 6:35**

<sup>35</sup> Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

#### **John 7:37-38**

<sup>37</sup> On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. <sup>38</sup> Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.”

#### **Revelation 22:17**

<sup>17</sup> The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let the one who hears say, “Come!” Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.